

## **Literacy in Each Center Area**

The POA (Program Quality Assessment) for the Georgia's Pre-K Program suggests adding language and literacy items and writing supplies to each center area of the classroom. By enhancing the learning centers with literacy materials, the teachers can engage with the children to increase their phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary development.

Below you will find suggested items to include in the classroom display, center areas, and the outdoor classroom environment. This list is not exhaustive, it was developed to share ideas and give you, the classroom teachers, a "jump start" with literacy development in the Pre-K class.

### **Language and Literacy Center**

*Remember to include a variety of book types such as fantasy, fairy tales, non-fiction, wordless, repetitive, American sign language, Braille, informational, written in various languages, stories about people that reflect different cultures, ages, and abilities, Picture Dictionary, etc. Also remember to include your writing area and books that reflect the current topic or interest as indicated on item B4 of the POA.*

Display Book Jackets	Class Made Books	Books on Tape
Flannel Board with Stories/Pieces	Display Posters from Authors	Puppets
Big Books	Charts or Posters of Familiar Rhymes	
Magnetic Stories (with a magnetic surface)	Magnetic Letters (with a magnetic surface)	
Story Sequencing Cards or Photographs	Foam Letters (various sizes)	
Mailboxes (one for each child and teacher)	Letter Matching Games	

### **Math and Manipulative Center**

*Remember to include a variety of books that encourage counting, shape and size identification, measuring, same and opposites, numbers, money, math terms (more, some, all, less, same, different, part of, half, short, tall, large, small, heavy, light, etc.), etc. Also remember to include your writing materials.*

Measuring Tools (tape measures, rulers, etc.)	Scales (bath, balance, etc.)	
Child Safe Compass	Number Stickers	Interlocking Letter Cubes
Letter Beads (with laces)	Empty Box Fronts Cut into Puzzles	
Number Cubes (dice)	Dominos	Calendars
Sorting Items	Calculators	Time Keepers (timers)
Wood Puzzles	Floor Puzzles	Shape Stickers
Foam Numbers	Parquetry, Attribute, or Pattern Blocks	
Adding Machines	Games (matching, association, classification, etc.)	
Scrabble game pieces	Magnetic Numbers (with magnetic surface)	

## **Dramatic Play Center**

*Remember to include a variety of books that focus on familiar foods, food from other cultures, families, friends, careers, day to day activities, school, sports, picnics, circus, self-concept, feelings and emotions, fears, self-help skills, celebrations, manners, travel, etc. Also, remember to include a variety of writing materials.*

Cookbooks	Recipe Cards (blank)	Writing Utensils
Old Checks	Order Pads (restaurant)	Clipboards
Coupons	Sale Flyers	Pretend Credit Cards
Calculators	Junk Mail	Old Business Cards
Magazines	Newspaper	Message Pads
Computer Keyboard	Empty Food Containers	Telephones
Rolodex	Phone Books	Address Book
Cash Register or Adding Machine	Play Money	Stuffed Animals
Dolls	Dress-Up Clothes	Food Scale
Timers (sand, kitchen, etc.)	Pretend Clocks	Real Mailbox
Environmental Print (familiar signs or logos)		Rolls of paper "tickets"
Paper grocery bags (with store logo)	Price tags (tie-on or self adhesive)	
Menus (store bought or made)		

## **Science Center**

*Remember to include books about birds, bugs and insects, animals, weather, seasons, recycling, the environment, space, ocean, sea shells, gardening, trees and plants, nutrition, cooking (easy to follow recipes), five senses, dental care, the human body, dinosaurs, volcanoes, simple experiments, magnets, etc. Science Magazines such as "Ranger Rick", "Our Big Back Yard", "National Geographic", etc. are great ideas too. Remember to add in your writing materials.*

Bug, Insect, Animal Stickers	Graph Paper	Texture Boards or Samples
Bug, Insect, Animal Pictures	Balance Scale	Flashlight
Magnifying Glasses	Letter Cookie Cutters (for clay or dough)	
Collections of Real Items	Letter Stampers (for clay or dough)	
Writing utensils and paper to make observations on (spiral notebooks, plain paper, etc.)		
Establish a Recycle Center (plastic, newspapers, magazines, etc.)		
Games that relate to science (what sound does this animal make? What is the mommy/baby called? Does this one live in the jungle or the zoo?, matching, sound discrimination, etc.)		

## **Music and Movement**

*Remember to include a variety of books that encourage rhyming, singing, and chanting. Books that include nursery rhymes, lullabies, and Mother Goose are also great ideas for this center.*

Song Chart	Finger-play Chart	Finger-play Mitt
Nursery Rhyme Chart	Puppets	Bean Bags
Parachute	Flashlight	Story Apron (and stories)
Recorded Songs in Various Languages	Streamers, Scarves, Etc. to Dance with	
Music Activities that Include Directions (i.e. The Hokey Pokey)		

### **Art Center**

*Remember to include a variety of books that encourage individual expression and color exploration, shapes, simple drawings, famous artists and their work, people/animals/characters engaging in creative processes, etc.*

Letter Stamps and Stamp Pads	Letter Stickers	Letter Sponges
Magazines	Newspapers	School Supply or Toy Catalogs
Writing Utensils (various sizes)	Dry Letter Noodles	Alphabet Paper Punches
Prints of Famous Artist's Work	Letter Stencils	Chalkboards and Chalk
Tracing Paper	Carbon Paper	Measuring Tools
Lined and Unlined Paper	Lite Brite	Write On – Wipe Off Boards (and markers)
Etch-A-Sketch	Blank books (teacher made or store bought)	

### **Block Center**

*Remember to include about transportation, farms, houses, zoo, cities, community helpers, safety, neighborhoods, buildings, tools, communication, travel, etc. Remember to include a variety of writing materials.*

Blue Prints	Maps	Graph Paper
Traffic signs (made or bought)	Tools (plastic)	Instruction Manuals (flyers)
Steering Wheel	Keys and Key Rings	Vehicles (large and small)
Small People (plastic or wood)	Animals (plastic or wood)	Bath Scale
Measuring Tools	Walkie Talkies	Story Blocks or Dominos
Brochures from Travel Agent	Photographs or Postcards of Buildings	
Catalogs or sale flyers from hardware or home supply stores		Public transportation cards/tokens
Items to make signs (paper, craft sticks, tape, etc.)		Writing Utensils

### **Outdoor (Playground)**

*A backpack, laundry basket, grocery basket, etc. can be filled each day to take outside. Be sure to take a blanket or quilt to sit on. Sunglasses might be needed too.*

*Remember to include books on insects, bugs, spiders, traffic, birds, weather, parks, sports, safety, etc.*

Sidewalk Chalk	Binoculars and Bird Book	Flannel Board
Flannel Boards with Stories/Pieces	Bug Box and Bug Book	Wind Socks
Weather Thermometer	Measuring Tools	Walkie Talkies
Traffic Signs for the trike path	Notepads or Clipboards with Paper and Writing Utensils	
Word cards for outdoor items (ball, bird, swing, sun, cloud, etc.)		Magnifying Glasses
Wind Chimes	Sensory Table with Sand/Water Toys	Parachute
Foot Books (place your foot here while you read this, then place the other foot here, etc.)		

## **Classroom Display**

*Although this is not a specific learning center, the classroom display reflects many literacy experiences for children. Consider the following when you add to your classroom display.*

Adding Dictation to Children's creations	Hanging Class Made Charts and Graphs
Recipe Charts	Language Experience Charts
Children's Writings and Drawings	Words in Various Languages
Class Rules (try to keep these to a minimum and remember to add corresponding pictures)	
American Sign Language Poster	Braille Poster
A Neighborhood Bulletin Board displayed at the children's eye level (this could include flyers, brochures, stationary, etc. from local businesses)	

## **Additional Ideas**

Labeling bins and shelves for children with pictures and words helps children recognize that print has meaning. Sorting and sequencing materials builds skills for children to sequence letters to make words later. Label familiar items in your classroom (door, sink, etc.) and you will soon start to see the children writing these words.

Be sure to include the children's names and the alphabet in the classroom. Children need to see models when they are learning to write. It works best if you display these at children's eye level and/or in a center.

Include items in your large group/circle time that encourage literacy development. Things like the daily menu, names of who is present, etc. are meaningful in a child's day and will be items the children can begin to read quickly. This can be done with sentence strips, chart paper, a write on – wipe off board, a chalkboard, a bulletin board on the children's eye level, etc. A class message board can be a place for children to display important messages too (lost blanket). Remember to use pictures along with words whenever possible.

Having materials for children to act out familiar nursery rhymes is a wonderful large or small group literacy activity. Some suggestions include a candle and candlestick for "Jack Be Nimble" or a small stool, a plastic spider, and a bowl for "Little Miss Muffet" or a metal pail for "Jack and Jill".

A photo album can be added to each center area to document the children engaging with the materials. As the school year progresses, the children will expand their interactions with the materials and each other. Photos are a great tool to include in portfolios and share at parent conferences.

You could add a literacy container/portable writing center to each center. This would include writing utensils, paper, clipboards, books that relate to a specific center area, etc.

Consider implementing a Center Choice Board. Each learning center would be labeled on the chart and the children can attach their names (with Velcro or clothespins) to the center they choose to work in.

We all know that children can be rough on books, especially those favorites. Think about setting up a Book Hospital in the classroom. The children can use erasers, scotch tape, book tape, etc. to repair class books. Baby wipes could be used to clean the covers of books. Be sure to label crates or trays so the children know which books need repairing and which have been repaired.

**Pleaser refer to the Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards' Language and Literacy section for specific performance indicators as well as the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) for specific requirements for your Pre-K classroom.**